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Number 13

November 1979

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The Spring meeting of the Society took place on Saturday, May 19th, in the Snow Room of the Bobst Library at New York University. Some fifty members and friends were present. After reports from the Secretary and Treasurer, the inauguration of our West Coast Chapter was formally announced, and on the motion of Geoff Frohnsdorff, seconded by Morton Cohen, it was unanimously agreed to convey a message of congratulation, and an offer of financial support. On the proposal of Stan Marx, for the Nominating Committee, the Society's officers were also re-elected without dissent. Roger Henkle, of Brown University, then read an enlightening paper on "Modes of Characterization in the *Alices*", which was followed by a visit to the legendary Berol Collection. On return, your President delivered an appreciation of Morton Cohen's *Letters of LC*, to which Morton briefly and blushingly replied, and the proceedings ended with a fascinating reminiscence by Herb Ahrend of a youthful encounter (in 1932) with the real-life 'Alice', and an account by David Schaefer of visits to the English and Dutch societies, during his recent European trip. Our thanks go to Library Director John Frost for this, our second excursion to the Bobst, and for his benevolent presence throughout the afternoon.

On the previous evening, members had been able to attend, at the CUNY Graduate Center, a colloquium co-sponsored with the Victorian Committee of the CUNY Graduate English Program, at which Nina Auerbach gave an illustrated talk on "Alice as Fallen Woman", an intriguing, though non-too-plausible, attempt to align our heroine with the *femmes fatales* of the Victorian decadence. This was followed by a cocktail party, to celebrate publication of the *Letters*, most kindly provided by the Oxford University Press.

Our Fall meeting was held on Saturday, October 20th, at the Canaday Library of Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania. About thirty members attended. After an agreeable lunch, it was decided in formal business that the Society's ever-growing expenses should be met (though reluctantly) by an increase in dues to \$15.00, and by an effort to enlarge our 300-strong membership. Diana Marx offered to co-ordinate suggestions for improved publicity, and will welcome ideas on the subject. In preparation for the Carroll sesquicentennial in 1982, Stan Marx also accepted duty as a one-man planning commission, with an exhibition as one possible project. (The address of both is 15 Sinclair Martin Drive, Roslyn NY, 11576). The main fare of the afternoon comprised a talk by James Tanis, Bryn Mawr Librarian, on his remarkable acquisition of Henry Holiday's original illustrations for *The Hunting of the Snark*, and a slide presentation by Charles Mitchell, of the Art History Department, tracing the sequence in composition of both designs and text. After a visit to the admirably-shown drawings themselves, and inspection of a wide variety of *Snark* editions (mostly contributed by members) in an adjacent book-display, the day concluded with a perceptive interpretation by Edward Guiliano: "Laughter and Despair: LC's *Hunting of the Snark*", and with cocktails at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gardner Cox, to whom thanks are due, along with Messrs. Tanis and Mitchell, for making our own modest Snark-hunt so much more enjoyable than its ill-fated prototype.

#### □ Meanwhile in California . . . . .

Two meetings of the West Coast Chapter have been held, the first on May 27th, at the San Francisco home of Sandor Burstein, with talks by Mark Burstein and W.W. Bartley III, and the second in Los Angeles on October 26th, where Mr. and Mrs. William Self were the hosts, and the main feature was an Alician film show presented by the Schaefers. Some twenty members attended on each occasion. Full details, and further announcements, may be found in *The Herald*, to which all Western members are exhorted to subscribe.

Miss Jennifer Graham was a decorative and somehow familiar-looking visitor to the first West Coast meeting in SF. The photo, by Sandor Burstein, is reproduced by permission of her father.



#### □ Special Announcements

That indispensable guide for collectors, *The Lewis Carroll Handbook*, has been revised and brought up to date by Denis Crutch. It is published in this country by The Shoe String Press at \$37.50, but can be obtained by Society members at a discount of 20% (\$30.00) by writing to: Dept. DT, Archon Books, 995 Sherman Avenue, Hamden CT, 06514. Make checks payable to Shoe String Press, Inc.; payment by Master Charge or Visa is acceptable, if you provide the card number, the four-digit interbank number, and the expiration date.

There will be a Special Session devoted to LC at the 1979 Convention of the Modern Language Association in San Francisco. It will be held from 9:00 - 10:15 p.m. in the Teakwood Room of the Hilton Hotel on Saturday, December 29th. Edward Guiliano will lead a discussion on "Lewis Carroll: Victorian Modern", and all Society members are invited to attend.

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of LC's birth (January 27th, 1832), Edward Guiliano is editing an anthology of new essays. Submissions on any aspect of Carroll's life and work are welcome; they should be between ten and forty typewritten pages in length, and may contain illustrations. Queries and contributions should be sent to the Editor at 41 Jane St. 4D, New York NY, 10014.

#### □ Events

*But Never Jam Today*, Vinette Carroll's black musical *Alice*, opened at the Longacre Theatre in New York on July 31st. It had fairly good reviews, and lasted long enough for the Schaeferes to see and enjoy it, but folded, alas, the same night.

From September through October, a selection from Dr. Sandor Burstein's renowned Alice collection was on show at the Gleeson Library of the University of San Francisco.

Byron Sewell's equally celebrated collection will be on selective exhibition throughout December at the Detering Book Gallery in Houston, Texas. The catalogue, in which Byron records his adventures as a Carroll collector, is exceptionally interesting, and may be obtained, for \$2.00, from Byron at 1952 Augusta, Houston, Texas, 77057, or (we imagine) from the Detering Bookshop itself. David Del Tredici's *Final Alice* is currently being recorded by the Chicago Symphony (its first performance) under Sir George Solti. Three more Alician works by the same composer are said to be in hand, the first to be premiered by the St. Louis Symphony next February, and the other two by the San Francisco and Philadelphia Orchestras, respectively, in September and December of 1981. Granada TV, in Britain, has been running a 13-part series on Early Photography, beginning June 5th, with Carroll among the pioneers whose achievements are on view.

West German TV had a children's programme, *Alice hinter den Spiegeln*, on July 20th, and another on August 25th, comparing Carroll and J.R.R. Tolkien; Horst Muggenburg liked it, though the *Kölner Stadtanzeiger* (August 27th) did not.

According to member Andrew Ogus, Alice and the Mad Hatter shared a float at the Gay Pride Parade in San Francisco, and the former was also to be seen on the T-shirts of the Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club, over the legend: "Just Ask Alice". Comment seems useless. The Wild West is evidently beyond hope.

## □ Achievements and Publications

Congratulations to member Nancy Willard on receiving — for the second time — the honor of a Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, for her *Island of the Grass King* (Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich 1979). The first was for its predecessor, *Sailing to Cythera*, 1974. The award is made by the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, whose “selective criteria” deserve some other kind of award for a really amazing specimen of vacuous Ed. School prose.

Morton Cohen has been active, as usual, with articles on “A World of Fantasy by Post”, in the *Telegraph Sunday Magazine* for July 15th, and on *Memoria Technica*, in the *Library Chronicle* of the University of Texas at Austin (August). A selection from the *Letters* appeared in the May number of *Harper's*, with drawings by Maurice Sendak, and the work itself was reviewed in the London *Daily Telegraph*, by Francis King, on September 9th.

Byron Sewell's Chicken Little Press has produced *Paper Dolls from Alice*, with a wardrobe taken from a variety of illustrators, in a small edition for collectors. If enough requests are received, further copies can be made available at \$3.00 (but send no money yet). See ‘Events’ for the address. The same author-publisher has also devised *Alice's Adventures in Oceania*, in which an Orwellian narrative surrounds a (separately printed) version of the Mad Tea-Party in Newspeak! Byron should have kept it till 1984. A further instalment of *LC in the Popular Culture* is in production, and should be out soon.

Anne Clark's *LC, A Biography* has been issued here by Schocken Books, 200 Madison Avenue, NY 10016, at \$12.95. It is a well-researched study, particularly of the early years, and shows throughout a commendable preference for matter-of-fact over psychological theorizing. Since Carroll's life is less interesting than his personality, the portrait that results is exact enough in detail, but a little lacking in depth.

*Songs from Alice*, with music by Don Harper and illustrations (from the 1920s) by Charles Folkard, is available at \$8.95 (with a cassette at \$9.95) from Holiday House, 18 East 53rd St., New York NY, 10022.

*Photographs* by Graham Ovenden (\$25.00; publisher not stated) contains some Alician subjects by the well-known photographer-artist-collector, who is said to be planning a Carrollian museum.

## □ Alice in the Magazines — and Elsewhere

*MS* magazine for September had an Alician cover, heralding ‘Alice in Campusland’, an article within, on student feminist problems; only the title is of Carrollian interest.

A new Pelican book, *Modern Linguistics*, by Neil Smith and Deirdre Wilson, has an equally irrelevant W. Rabbit as Herald on its front; Humpty Dumpty would have been more to the point.

*Games* magazine for July/August features an ill-drawn Alice as its cover-design, and ‘Curiouser and Curiouser’, a slightly stale piece by James Fisher, on Carrollian mazes and puzzles; the rules for ‘Arithmetical Croquet’ are included.

The Spring number of *Pilgrimage* contains approving references to LC in an article by Brad Keeney on the psychotherapeutic sage, Gregory Bateson.

*Circuit News* of May 15th carries an advertisement for op amps — whatever *they* are — from Precision Monolithics, of 1500 Space Park Drive, Santa Clara, CA, 95050; there is a whole series of these ads, all on Carrollian themes (the company's President is rumored to be Alice-mad), and both copywriting and graphics are good enough to make them worth sending for, even if op amps are not among your immediate needs.

*C Notes: A Guide to the C Programming Language* (whatever *that* is), by C. T. Zahn, Yourdon Press 1979, uses quotations from *Alice* in its chapter-heads.

The June number of *Penthouse* magazine has a brief comment (they would) on L.C.'s *Photographs of Nude Children*, finding them “quite incredibly innocent”, which by *Penthouse* standards they certainly are.

A more sober publication, *The Journal of Near Eastern Studies* for April, has a reference to Humpty Dumpty in a review by Dennis Pardee.

In *Groucho*, by Hector Arce (Putnam 1979), it is recorded that the great man read *Alice* every year, and recommended others to do the same.

Followers of the Alley Oop comic strip will have noted that the Neanderthal hero has lately been visiting Wonderland. The story is followed in some detail, and is at all events a change from the usual cave-men and dinosaurs.

(Thanks to Elizabeth Erickson, Jon Handel, Auguste Imholtz, Patricia McCarthy, Andrew Ogus, Charles Papert, Richard Tyce and Nancy Willard for contributions to this section).

## ❑ Shopping List

Paperback Traffic, 535 Castro St., San Francisco, 94114, has now added Mock Turtle and Queen of Hearts rubber stamps to its range; both are at \$4.00, with a \$1.50 handling charge.

Tenniel T-shirts, in Mad Tea-Party, Cat, Caterpillar, Hatter and Herald designs, can be ordered from Jack of Hearts, Box 180 A, R.D. 1, Sidney Center, NY 13839; colors and sizes vary, but the basic price is \$4.50, with a \$1.00 shipping tag.

Member Kay Rossman, of The Cheshire Cat gift shop, 3 Lincklaen St., Cazenovia, NY, 13035, has a large array of figurines, Alician window ornaments, Tenniel soap figures, games, pendants, belt buckles and – of course – Cheshire cats; send for her list. The soap, if nothing else, can also be obtained from the N.Y. Botanical Garden gift shop, Bronx, NY, 10458.

Dover Needlework Books include *Favorite Illustrations from Children's Classics in Counted Cross-stitch*, by Ginnie Thompson, at \$1.50; so cross – and even good-tempered – stitchers can decorate their own T-shirts with Carrollian motifs, if they wish.

For mad gardeners, the 'Alice in Wonderland' daylily is available, at \$6.25, from White Flower Farm, Litchfield, Conn., 06759.

Instructional materials from Disney Schoolhouse, 851 North Elm St., Orange, CA, 92667, include a copying book, *Disney's Healthy Way in Wonderland*, at \$5.95, and accompanying cut-out figures at \$4.45. (Acknowledgements to Nancy Willard and Patricia McCarthy for several of the items listed above).



*This bizarrely-named boutique, jeanatorium or what not was spotted by Nancy Willard on the Porta Rossa Florence.*

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